CITY OF West Linn

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

RESIDENTIAL INFILL / PUD TASK FORCE

Background Materials Meeting #4

August 11, 2010

Task Force ("TF") meeting #4:

INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION

To assist the TF members and Staff in preparing a Framework Plan, help identify specific tools for drafting our code amendments, and to further clarify areas of our current code that can be improved, Staff has prepared the following summary of how other community's regulate residential infill development. With this information, the TF can compare and contrast the City's current approach with alternative methods from other areas; and ideally, identify specific tools and practices that can be used for our code amendments.

At our last meeting we established five (5) broad regulatory categories, and identified some of the elements of each, to be considered. These are described in the next section. The summary provided of the various codes was completed with these categories in mind.

The examples provided for this task were chosen primarily due to the fact that they have specifically undertaken amendments to their codes to address infill issues. They utilize include innovative and relevant techniques that are positively recognized in the professional planning community and share similarities with the City of West Linn ('COWL'). When reviewing the particulars of the examples provided, remember to also review the model code provisions provided to you in your Task Force meeting #3 package (State of Oregon and American Planning Association).

OVERVIEW

Applicability

Applicability can also be thought of as the 'scope' of a regulation. It establishes which properties must, or may be, subject to certain requirements. For example, common considerations include: should the regulations be applied to properties with certain characteristics such as size, location, percentage of constrained land, surrounding uses, existing lots of record, single-family homes, etc.

Note that the TF has been given direction by the Planning Commission to amend the City Code to cease the current requirement for many properties with environmental constraints (over 25% of the site) to be processed under the PUD Chapter of the Code. Also, as seen in the examples, most communities do not allow PUD's for smaller properties.

Process/Review type

The procedures for approval can act as incentives or disincentives for certain types of development. Considerations for the TF to consider include optional, discretionary

approval processes, allowing modifications by right, or with an alternative variance process.

The TF has expressed an interest in exploring the option of creating a two 'track' review process. One would be faster with clear and objective standards; the other would be more discretionary, would allow for more flexibility in design, and would require a more intensive review process. The COWL does not currently offer this type of review process. Several examples of other Cities that use this process are provided.

Environmentally constrained lands

Every jurisdiction makes provisions in their Code for addressing the development of properties that include environmentally constrained lands. Typically, Cities create incentives for, or require, the preservation of sensitive areas by allowing the development to be 'clustered' on the buildable portion of the land. Of interest to some TF members are examples that include provisions that require applicants to provide a mechanism to ensure maintenance of common areas or environmentally sensitive areas. Specific examples provided in this report detail how other Cities regulate this.

Compatibility

There are a wide variety of methods used in an effort to achieve compatibility. Due to the subjective nature of determining compatible development, no jurisdiction can be completely successful in attaining this goal. Examples of methods include unique bulk and setback requirements, design guidelines, menu-based design elements, or regulating building orientation. Of particular interest are examples of a menu-based 'checklist' of amenities, sliding scales for lot coverage based on building heights, and a recognition that garage size and orientation is of paramount importance. Note that many jurisdictions require as part of their applications requirements a 'survey' of the surrounding built environment surrounding the site.

Additional items of interest

In the examples I have included some tools and methods we have not yet discussed. The City's Planning Commission and TF have both recognized that there are no specific provisions in the City Code for alternative housing types that may be appropriate for infill areas. This includes cottage housing, senior-restricted housing, or zero-lot line housing. I have attached two specific cottage housing code provisions for your review.

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

LAKE OSWEGO

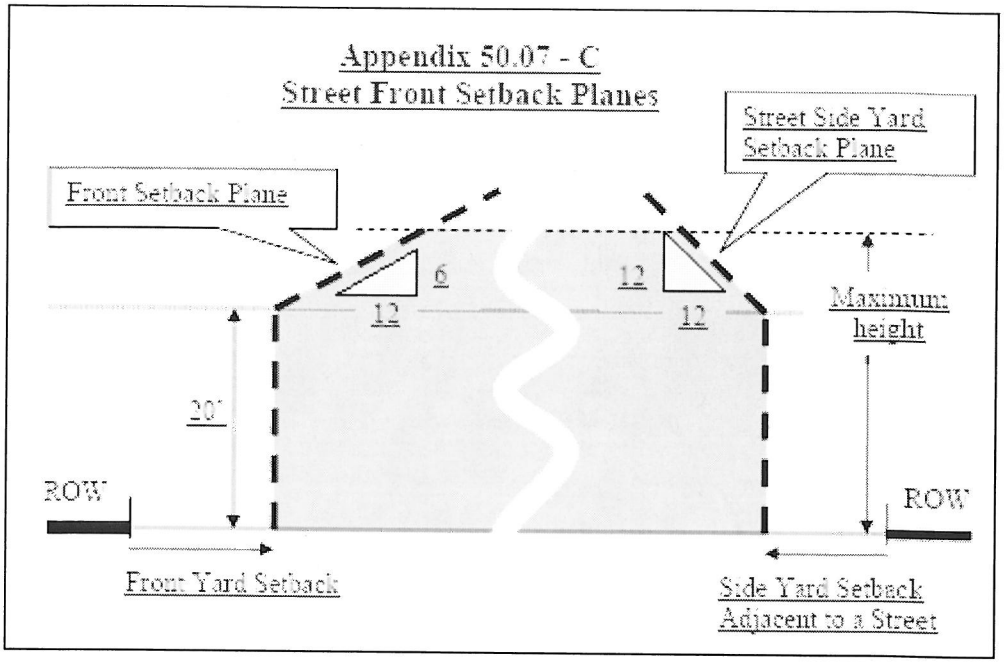
As we have discussed, the City of Lake Oswego recently (last month) adopted amendments to their Infill regulations. They have made minor modifications to their standards over the years and the most recent amendments were more significant. I am not aware of another City, other than Portland, that has devoted as much time and resources into their infill/compatibility regulations as Lake Oswego. Due to the similarities between our communities (size, location, housing type, development patterns, etc.) I have attached their Staff's summary of the most recent amendments (Attachment A). They illustrate some of the problems that the City discovered in their original regulations and how they are correcting them.

Significantly, Lake Oswego allows developers the option of being reviewed by an "Infill Design Review" (includes architects and Staff) to modify provisions of the Code (setbacks, etc). Design review is not an option at this time for the COWL, never the less, Lake Oswego's detailed infill regulations can be vary instructive for the COWL.

Link to entire Lake Oswego Code
http://www.ci.oswego.or.us/cityatty/city_of_lake_oswego_code/Chapter_50/index.html

Some key points from Lake Oswego:

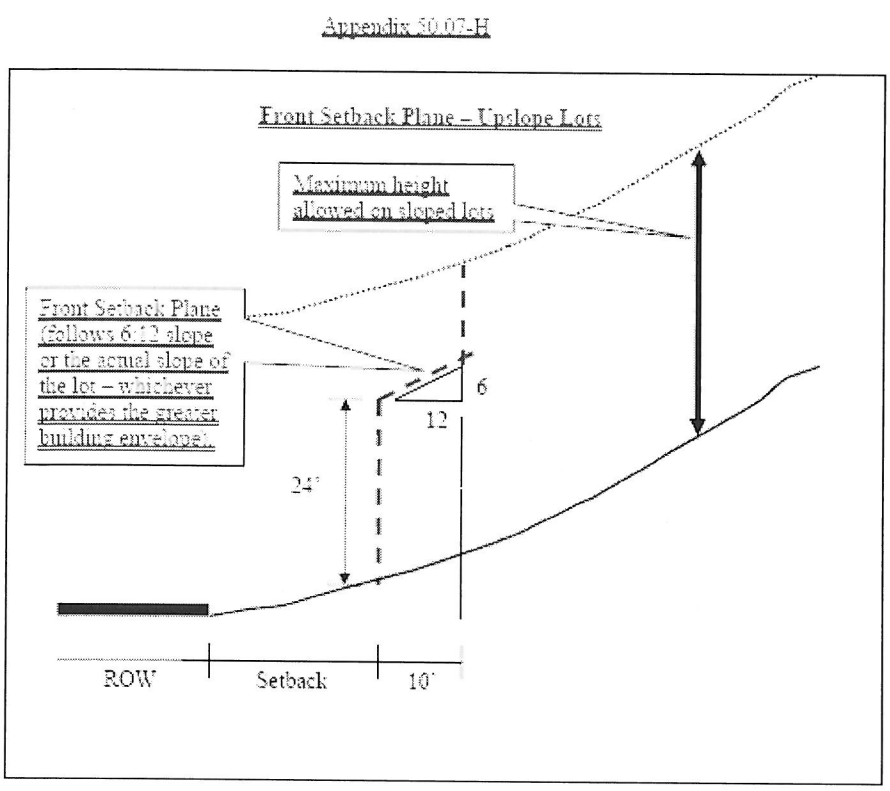
- Latest amendments recommend development of 'neighborhood overlays', ad an infill design handbook
- Applicable to SF, duplex and existing lots of record
- Provide for adjustable FAR's (via formula) for more flexibility, has higher lot coverage for lower scaled homes. (eg. lower height , higher lot coverage)
- Emphasis on garage standards
- Utilize front setback 'planes' that 'step back (wedding cake approach).



- Determine compatibility (Staff review) if development is consistent with the "pattern and character" in the neighborhood and street and "*within vicinity of the subject site including, at a minimum, the 20 dwelling units that are closest to the subject site when measured along the street or streets abutting the subject site. The City Manager shall also consider any neighborhood design objectives or guidelines for residential development that have been adopted by the City as part of a neighborhood plan.*"

- The City has a menu of design options from which applicants might choose to reduce the actual and perceived scale of neighbor-facing side elevations. Options include wall plane limitations, off-sets, porches, and landscaping.

Steep slope provisions:



- On lots with sloping topography, provides up to a four feet increase in height on the downslope portion of the lot to allow for more floor area at a single level.

- Adjusts how the front setback plane is measured for slopping lots. For downslope lots, the base height is measured from the street centerline. For upslope lots, the front setback plane follows a 6:12 slope or the actual slope within the building envelope, whichever is greater.

- City has minimum PUD size of 75K sf

- City has a lower level of variance:. Class 1 (minor) variances: Setbacks up to 50%, up to 15% FAR, maximum grade of a private street or driveway, distance of driveway from intersections, Variances to driveway width

- Flag Lots provisions:

- Requires a five-foot setback from the access drive to existing house on parent parcel.
- Requires street connectivity for properties of 1.75 acres or greater.
- Restricts height of homes on flag lots to abutting properties
- New dwellings on flag lots shall have the front of the house oriented towards the access lane.

- *"The reviewing authority may require conditions of approval to include measures such as specific building locations, increased setbacks, additional height restrictions, location and orientation of windows and other openings."*

Development of Environmentally Sensitive lands:

- May alter up to 20% setbacks lot width and depth.
- Transfer density at 100%
- Requires restrictive covenant required prior to final platting to protecting the land and for maintenance if necessary (require HOA and incorporation papers prior to plat)
- Cluster developments: *"Except as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of this section, an applicant for development subject to environmental review may vary from the lot dimensional standards (building setbacks, lot size, lot width, and lot depth) otherwise applicable without a formal variance pursuant to LOC Article 50.68"*

Vancouver, WA

The City of Vancouver spent several years crafting their infill development standards. I have detailed their tiered review process and method for determining compatibility.

Some key points:

- Permitted in low density single-family districts
- Standards are optional for property owner.
- Maximum 2.5 acres
- Existing lots of record may be subject to the requirements.
- Definition: Must have urban development abutting the subject site on at least 50% of its non-street perimeter. ("urban development" includes – all non-SF zoned parcels, developed SF lots less than 2.5 acres, or plats less than 5 yrs old)
- If nine (9) or fewer units, shorter review process
- Single-family requires Tier I review and attached housing require Tier II

"There are two levels of infill standards and incentives: Tier 1 and Tier 2. The Tier 2 infill standards offer greater incentives but require compliance with design standards and a neighborhood meeting. Application of either the Tier 1 or Tier 2 infill provisions of this Chapter is an option available for parcels that meet the eligibility criteria."

- Expedited Development Review Process.
- Special notice to immediate adjacent neighbors is required.

Tier 1:

- Administrative review
- . allows for reduction of min. lot size (for SF - min lot size 4K – attached SF is 3K min.)

- width and depth mod's up to 20%
- setbacks- 18 garage, 10 front , same side.

Tier II: standards (required if attached SF housing)

- NA meeting
- Ped. Pathways required between attached housing
- Max. of four attached housing permitted
- No min. lot width/ depth req.
- Min. size lot – 3K TH, or 4K duplexes
- Regulate bldg coverage and allow reduced setbacks

The City requires consistency with the "predominant character" of the 'block face' – this includes all properties on both sides of the subject road on that block. Must have similar: bldg orientation, access location, building heights (average number of stories), roof pitch, setback, etc.

Development of environmentally constrained lands.

Density transfers -

- 100 % transfer of density
- Can reduce lots to 80% of minimum lot size in the District

Additional items of interest:

The City has alternative 'infill transportation' standards:

- Staff approval of road modifications for access spacing revision of up to fifteen (15) percent from the standard detailed
- Street frontage improvements are based on existing or potential condition along the fronting roadway.

The final Infill Dev. Standards must be recorded on the final plat.

Prior to final plat approval maintenance of all common areas must be recorded via HOA or similar.

City of Portland

The package from TF meeting #3 includes the City of Portland's "Infill Design Toolkit", which includes specific building prototypes as well as excellent methods to assess compatibility with the surrounding properties. Additional provisions of note:

- City has community design standards (neighborhood centered) that can be applied in certain situations as an alternative to going through the design review.

- City offers the two 'tier' approval process. One includes objective standards and the other is a discretionary review.
- City also offers financial incentives 9waives certain fees) for appropriate infill development.
- Setbacks for the new development are based on setbacks of existing abutting development.

City of Salem

The Code provisions themselves in Salem are of little interest, however, they do have an award winning "Design Handbook" developed with the help of a TGM grant through the State (Attachment B) The handbook's standards are only applicable to specific targeted areas of the City that have a unique characteristics.

It includes design guidelines and standards for compact residential development that is intended to be used in established single-family districts with properties no larger than five acres. The purpose of the Compact Development overlay zone is to allow for a variety of housing types while assuring through design guidelines and standards that new development adapts to the established character of existing neighborhoods. The standards include provisions for landscaping, street trees, building orientation and articulation, private open space, and parking and circulation. To encourage compatibility between new and existing structures, the height of new buildings is limited to 28 feet at the required minimum setback. An additional one foot of building height is allowed per one foot of additional setback beyond the minimum (up to the maximum building height of the underlying zone). The full text from the design handbook is included attached primarily to single-family neighborhoods within the urban growth boundary. New construction in those areas must go through development design review and are subject to the design guidelines and standards. Applicants may choose to either meet the design standards (which require no public notice or hearing) or meet the design guidelines (which requires notice and discretionary review). (Reference Evaluation Memorandum "City of Milwaukie")

City of Canby.

Canby's Code provisions are quite short, easy to understand and surprisingly thorough. They include residential design standards and infill lot regulations.

- Definition- "Infill homes mean existing and new single family dwellings, manufactured homes, two-family dwellings, duplexes and triplexes on lots that have existing homes on two adjacent sides. Each adjacent home must be within 25 feet of the common lot line with the infill homes and have pre-existed for at least 5 years (dated from the existing homes final building permit approval)."

- For infill lots– lower lot coverage than remainder of City and max. height is reduced

- Includes significant garage provisions/regulations (up to 50 percent of the length of the street, no closer than primary residence)
- Front yard setbacks must be within five feet of the setback for the closest existing home on the same side of the street. *"Step-up Standard. At the interior and rear setback line, the infill home shall not exceed a single story exterior wall height."*
- Includes 'wedding cake' tiered height requirement along perimeter.
- Applies to single- family dwellings, manufactured homes, and two family dwellings
- The regulations are required, not optional
- Considerable leeway is given to Director to waive provisions if "impractical"
- Offers a 'design menu' in lieu of design regulations - it applies menu-based standards for abbreviated review (example below)

Design Menu Standards

1. *Dormers*

2. *Gables, hip roof, or gambrel roof form.*

3. *Recessed entries (minimum 2 foot recess)*

4. *Covered porch entries (minimum 48 square feet, minimum 4 feet deep)*

5. *Bay windows*

6. *Any eaves of 12 inches or greater*

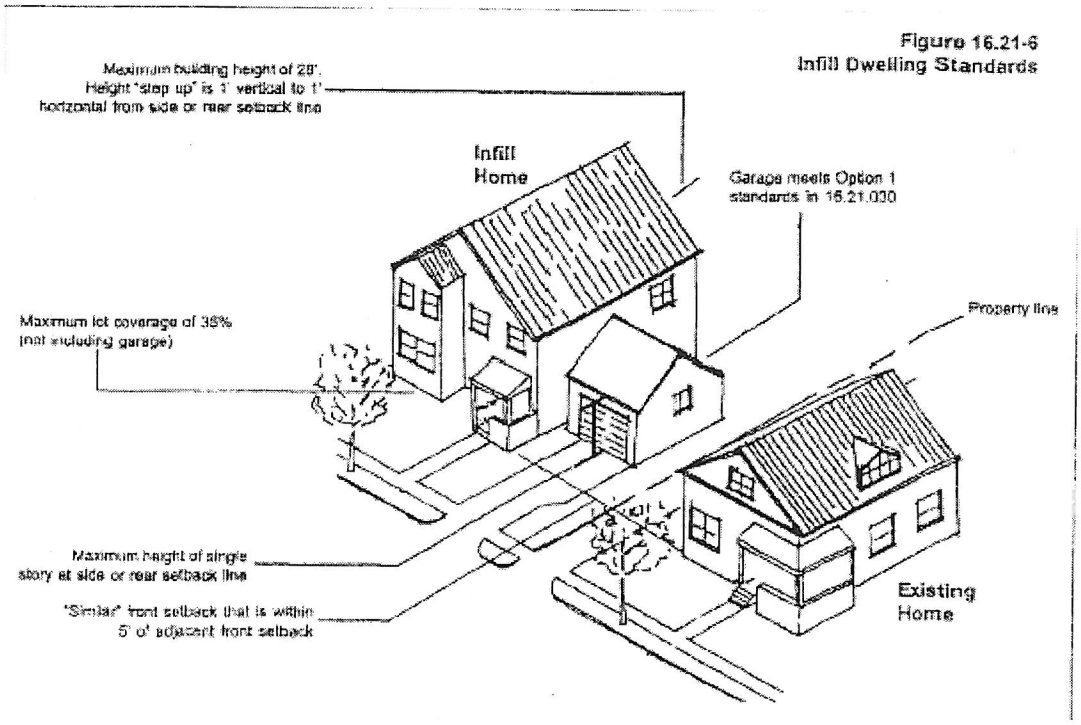
7. *Off-set of 16 inches or greater on building face or roof*

8. *Windows and main entrance doors occupy a minimum of 15% of the facade, not including the roof.*

9. *Window trim (minimum 4-inch) or shutters (minimum 8-inch)*

10. *Balconies or porch rail*

11. *Shakes, shingles, brick or other similar decorative materials occupy at least 60 square feet of the street facade.*



Tualatin

Like Lake Oswego, Tualatin's development pattern is similar to that of COWL. Tualatin does not have infill standards, but does include standards for 'small lots" that accompany their standards for developing environmentally sensitive lands. These are principal objectives of this project. Additionally, they have objective and discretionary criteria for architectural review.

- For natural areas, permits 1:1 density transfer with their 'smal lot' standards.
- Includes compatibility standards and criteria
- Requires sensitive areas to be dedication to the City (if City accepts)
- City may require establishment of an association to maintain sensitive lands if they remain private
- Small lot provisions permit lots to be reduced no more than 500 sf smaller than adjacent.
- Two levels of architectural review:

  Level I (Clear and Objective) with 'menu-based' criteria

  (must provide five of the following)

(v) Residential Wall Design

(A) Recessed entry –

front façade only.
(B) Portico – front façade only. A roofed porch-like space, open along at least one side, connected to the main dwelling entrance, supported by columns or pillars, and either protruding from or recessed within the main dwelling structure.
(C) Covered porch at least thirty-six square feet (36 sq. ft.) in area and at least four feet (4') deep.
(D) Balcony, which projects from the wall plane and is enclosed by a railing or parapet (low protective wall).
(E) Vertical offsets, at least two (2), either projecting or recessed, and at least six inches (6") deep and a minimum of four feet (4') long.
(F) Horizontal offset, either projecting or recessed, at least five inches (5") deep.
(G) Bay window, box win-dow, or box bay, which projects at least six inches (6") outward from the wall plane and forms a bay, alcove, or window seat.

<u>Level 2:</u> *Discretionary Level II (Discretionary) Allow for some relief provided demonstration of:*

Consistency with the objectives of the specific standard from which relief is sought, in light of the following discretionary guidelines:

(i) All roofs should be

pitched or sloping and articulated by use of such elements as dormers, gables, overhangs or eaves, and should have variations in roof pitch, height of roof planes, or roof orientation to create visual interest and avoid monotony in appearance.

(ii) Architectural articulation and other design elements, such as balco-nies, porches, dormers, bay windows, vertical or horizontal offsets, variations in cladding, or moldings should be used on all sides of the dwelling (except for a side of a single-family dwelling located in a side yard where the side yard of the dwelling abuts the side yard of an adjacent dwelling) to avoid stark unarticulated building façades (elevations), to minimize the scale and visual impact of a continuous flat wall surface, and to create a sense of visual interest for passersby and neighboring property owners.

(iii) The architectural character (i.e., exterior materials, architectural articulation, design elements, etc.) of the front façade (elevation) of the dwelling should be utilized on all sides of the structure to create a unified appearance and to avoid a single block or box appearance.

(iv) New dwellings should be designed and situated on a property in order to create and maintain a visual sense of harmony with surrounding development and should not overwhelm the scale of surrounding development.

(v) The overall architectural design of the dwelling should foster a compatible, positive relationship with the scale and character of the street, and the scale and character of surrounding existing development.

WILSONVILLE'

Does not have separate infill standards, but does have particular area plans, (Villibois, Old Town) with their own plans.

- Environmentally constrained lands –permits 50% transfer and demonstration of compatibility
- All setbacks may be modified when clustering
- City requires Planned Development approval for all properties over 2 acres
- Allows for any two property owners to agree to reduce setbacks to zero if both neighbors agree and they apply covenant to property.

ATTACHMENT A

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENTS FOR INFILL

Infill (Code Changes)

ORDINANCE NO 2524

The proposed code changes are intended to implement the recommendations of the City of Lake Oswego's Infill Task Force. The Task Force was originally formed in 2001 and produced a set of recommendations that were codified in 2003. The Task Force was reconvened in 2005 to evaluate the 2003 code amendments, make refinements, and address issues that were not resolved by the 2001group.

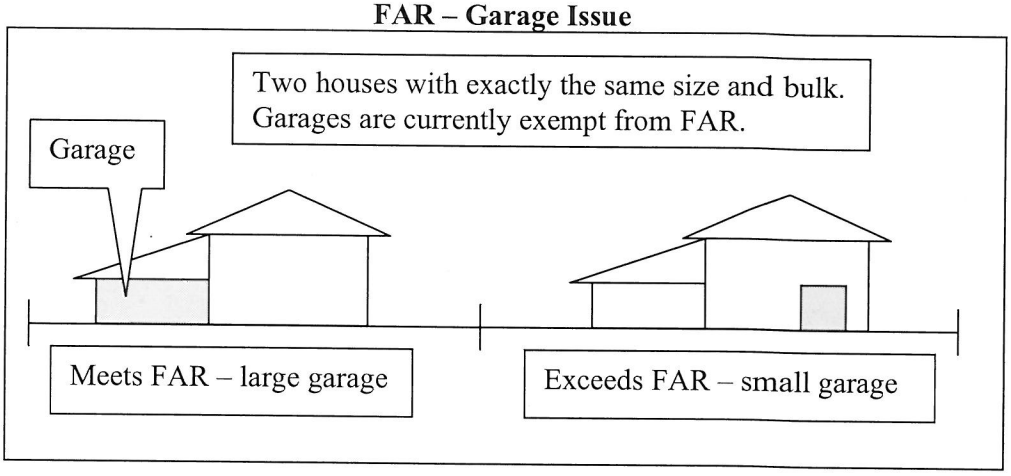
The summary below describes the proposed code changes by topic area. Each description is followed by a listing of the code sections that are proposed to be amended.

1. **Comprehensive Plan Amendments – Neighborhood Planning/Design Review**
   Issues: Incompatible houses sizes; City-wide code standards that don't always fit the unique characteristics of neighborhoods.
   Proposals: Two Comprehensive Plan text amendments have been proposed. One recommends using overlay zones to implement neighborhood plans and protect neighborhood character. The second recommends instituting a design review process for single family, duplex, and attached dwellings. See the materials regarding Ordinance 2523 for details and a summary of the proposals.

2. **Lot Coverage and Maximum Floor Area Ratio**
   Issues: Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and lot coverage tables result in abrupt step changes; FAR calculations sometimes result in inequities (garages and high ceilings are exempt).
   Proposals:
   - Adjusts lot coverage to eliminate the abrupt step change in coverage based on house height. Provides more flexibility and slightly greater lot coverage in order to encourage lower scaled houses.
   - The FAR is one method the City uses to limit house size and tie the floor area to the area of the lot. The proposal revises the FAR scale to eliminate abrupt step changes in house size based on lot size. A formula is proposed.
   - Amends FAR standards to include garages. The changes do not address room height or volume.
   - Current code allows a bonus in lot coverage and FAR when the garage is located to the rear of the primary structure. The proposal defines "to the rear of the primary structure" as at least 20 feet behind the front.
   - Amends the code to eliminate the bonus in lot coverage and FAR for detached garages in the First Addition Neighborhood. The original intent, to break up massing, is being subverted through the construction of multiple garages.

EXHIBIT F-2

FAR – Garage Issue



Section 2 - Lot Coverage and FAR – Sections to be amended:

50.08.040	Lot Coverage - R-7.5, R-10, and R-15
50.07.035	Lot Coverage - R-6
50.06.040	Lot Coverage - R-0, R-2, R-3, R-5, and WR
50.08.042	FAR - R-7.5, R-10, and R-15
50.07.037	FAR - R-6
50.06.035	FAR - R-0, R-2, R-3, R-5, and WR

3. Structure Design and Setback Planes

Issues: Tall houses close to the property line can be incompatible. Tall houses on corner lots can overpower the streetscape. Current wall plane standards need more flexibility.

Proposals:

- Applies the existing front setback plane concept to corner lots and side yards to push the mass and bulk to the center of the lot.
- Creates a menu of design options from which applicants might choose to reduce the actual and perceived scale of neighbor-facing side elevations. Options include wall plane limitations, off-sets, porches, and landscaping.

Setback Plane: The roof must fit behind the plane established by the lines.

Section 3 - Structure Design – Sections to be amended:

50.22.025	Special Yard Requirements
50.06.050-060	R-0, R-2, R-3, R-5, and WR
50.07.040	R-6
50.08.045	R-7.5, R-10 and R-15

4. **Yard Setbacks**

Issues: Houses are too close to the street on corner lots in the R-7.5 zone. Side yards are too narrow in the First Addition when two abutting lots both have five-foot setbacks.

Proposals:

- Provides a minimum 15-foot setback for corner lots in the R-7.5 zone.
- Provides a minimum 7.5-foot setback for side yards in the R-6 zone.

Section 4 - Yard Setbacks – Sections to be amended:

50.08.030	R-7.5
50.08.025	R-6

5. **Sloped Lots**

Issues: Provide greater flexibility on steeply sloped lots.

Proposals:

- Makes a distinction between sloped lots and steeply sloped lots (a steep slope is one with an average slope of 25%).
- On lots with sloping topography, provides up to a four feet increase in height on the downslope portion of the lot to allow for more floor area at a single level.
- On steeply sloped lots with at least 10 feet of elevation change across the building envelope, allows an increase in height from 35 feet to as much as 45 feet, provided certain conditions and design standards are met.

- Adjusts how the front setback plane is measured for slopping lots. For downslope lots, the base height is measured from the street centerline. For upslope lots, the front setback plane follows a 6:12 slope or the actual slope within the building envelope, whichever is greater.
- Allows an 18-foot minimum setback on steeply sloped lots.
- Does not require support structures to be enclosed.
- Establishes the front setback plane based on the average slope of the land on steeply sloped lots.

Section 5 - Sloped Lots – Sections to be amended:

50.02	Definitions
50.06.050-060	R-0, R-2, R-3, R-5, and WR
50.07.030-040	R-6
50.08.030-045	R-7.5, R-10 and R-15

6. **RID Review**

Issues: The Residential Infill Design (RID) Review process has been used for too wide a range of design adjustments. A very limited number of neighbors receive notice of the review process.

Proposals:

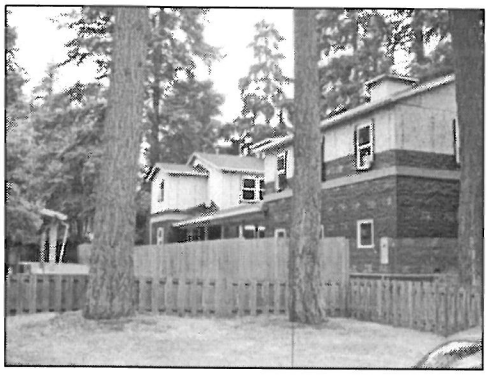
- Limits application of the current Residential Infill Design (RID) process. If approved, the RID process could no longer be used for adjusting lot coverage, floor area ratios (FAR), and height.
- Provides notice to properties within 200 feet of the site.
- Makes requested adjustments to the Floor Area Ratio a variance process rather than a RID process.

Section 6 - RID Review – Sections to be amended:

50.81.010	Notice of Minor Development Application
50.72.020	Residential Infill Design Review Standards
50.68.015	Classification of Variances

7. **Planned Developments/Open Space Dedications**

Earlier this year, the City Council amended the Community Development Code to restrict the use of the Planned Development process and to eliminate the requirement for common open space tracts and Planned Developments on parcels smaller than 75,000 sq. ft. in size. The change requires all lots in these small developments to meet the minimum lot size of the zone. Further code amendments to the Planned Development section are not part of the current package of changes.



8. **Variances**

Issues: Some code requirements discourage the remodeling of existing structures by making it too difficult to modify existing dwellings. In some situations, the Class 1 variance process can be used to reduce side yards to less than five feet.

Proposals:

- Allows variances for continuation of nonconforming building walls as long as the house does not grow larger than allowed in the zone.
- Allows for variances to preserve trees.
- Allows for variances for minor remodeling projects.
- Allows for Class 1 variances where survey errors have resulted in nonconforming homes.
- Requires Class 2 rather than Class 1 variances for reductions in side yard setbacks that are reduced to less than five feet.

Section 8 - Variances – Sections to be amended:

50.68.015	Classification of Variances

9. **Miscellaneous Code Provisions**

Issues: Remodeling projects require additional flexibility.

Proposal:

- Allows for reconstruction of nonconforming houses after fire or other destruction.
- Allows increases in roof pitch for nonconforming structures where the height limit of the zone is not exceeded and no additional living space is created as a result.
- Provides new approval criteria and process for remodeling projects that exceed code standards by no more than 2.5%.

Section 9 - Miscellaneous Code Provisions - Sections to be amended:

50.70.020	Nonconforming Structures
50.70.005	Nonconforming Structures
50.79.010	Ministerial Development Classification

10. **Duplexes and Single Family Attached**

Issues: Infill standards don't apply to duplexes and attached single family units.

Proposal:

- Applies infill standards to duplex and single family attached housing.
- Provides greater flexibility in meeting garage standards.

Section 10 Duplex and Single Family Attached - Sections to be amended:

50.06.065	R-0, R-2, R-3, R-5, and WR - Garage Appearance
50.07.047	R-6 - Garage Appearance
50.08.055	R-7.5, R-10 and R-15 - Garage Appearance

11. **Flag Lots/Serial Partitions.**

Issues: Flag lots are isolated from the surrounding neighborhood. Greater flexibility for some types of flag lot development is needed.

Proposal:

- Requires the front of the lot to be the side from which access is taken.
- Requires a "connecting lane" with houses fronting on the lane.
- Sets standards for the "connecting lane."
- Changes setbacks to provide more flexibility.
- Requires a five-foot setback from the access drive to existing house on parent parcel.
- Requires a 10-foot setback from the access drive with at least 20 feet for a parking area.
- Requires street connectivity for properties of 1.75 acres or greater.

Section 11 - Flag Lots/Serial Partitions - Sections to be amended:

50.68.015	Classification of Variances
50.20.020-030	Flag Lot Standards
50.57.020	Standards for Construction
50.60.005-035	Street Connectivity

ATTACHMENT B

Development Design Handbook

Multiple Family Development

Compact Development

Core Area Development

Historic Resources

North Downtown Planning District

Portland/Fairgrounds Road Overlay Zone

Edgewater Street/Wallace Road Overlay Zone

South Waterfront Mixed Use Zone

January 2009

CITY OF Salem AT YOUR SERVICE

PREFACE

The City of Salem Development Design Handbook is divided into ten sections. Each section is intended to provide the necessary information for a successful development proposal.

Section one provides an introduction to the city's development design process;

Section two outlines the design requirements for multiple family development;

Section three identifies the requirements for compact development;

Section four contains requirements for the core area;

Section five covers historic resources;

Section six covers requirements for development within the City's North Downtown Planning Districts;

Section seven covers requirements for development within the City's Portland/Fairgrounds road Overlay Zone;

Section eight lists the standards and guidelines for the Edgewater Street/Wallace Road Overlay Zone;

Section nine lists the standards and guidelines for the South Waterfront Mixed-Use zone; and

Section ten is the appendix which provides the definition of terms and project submittal requirements.

Salem's development design review process is unique (see Figure 1, pages 10-11). Other cities that offer a design review process may require that projects be evaluated by the Historic Landmarks Commission. Often it is not clear what criteria guides the decision-making body. In other instances, jurisdictions create very strict requirements as to appropriate architectural style or building color. Salem's process offers an applicant choices in determining how a project is reviewed.

The Salem design process is sensitive to the added costs, added time, and potentially subjective decisions which can result from a design review process, yet is equally sensitive to the inherent difficulty in requiring all projects to meet the same set of rigid standards. In balancing the two alternatives, the Salem design process allows the applicant to select either: (1) adherence to prescribed and detailed specific design standards, or (2) review of the project through a more flexible design review process. In this way, the applicant, not the City, selects the review process that best suit the objectives of the project.

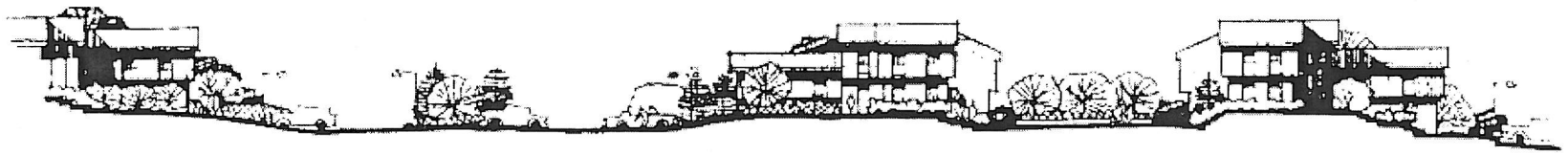
Strict adherence to the specific design standards results in a project design which, by definition, is acceptable to the City. Applicants selecting this alternative save processing time and their projects are checked for conformance with the design standards much like they are now checked for conformance with building code standards. There are no additional "processes" or additional City decisions required under this alternative; if the project meets the standards the City must approve the plans. And, like projects reviewed for conformity with building code standards, projects approved under this alternative would not be considered land use decisions; there are no public notice or hearing requirements; and the approved plans are not appealable to the State Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA).

However, in recognition that it is difficult to regulate good design, some very well designed projects may not meet all of the City's prescribed design standards. In this instance, the applicant may choose to follow the more general design guidelines and seek project approval from the City's Historic Landmarks Commission (for historic design review) or Planning Commission (for non-historic design review). This process adds considerable design flexibility, yet lengthens the review and involves City discretion for approval. Under this alternative, the project becomes a limited land use decision under State law, subject to public notice requirements and possible appeal to LUBA.

Whether the applicant chooses to design within the parameters of the specific design standards, or to go through the more flexible design review process, the goal is better overall project design and compatibility with existing neighborhoods.

To ensure project success, applicants should be certain that their development proposal complies with all city code requirements. Any submittal requirements of the development review process must be accurate and complete.

Perhaps the most important aspect to consider in the project proposal is the character of the area surrounding the project. This handbook helps applicants clear the hurdles often associated with defining neighborhood character.



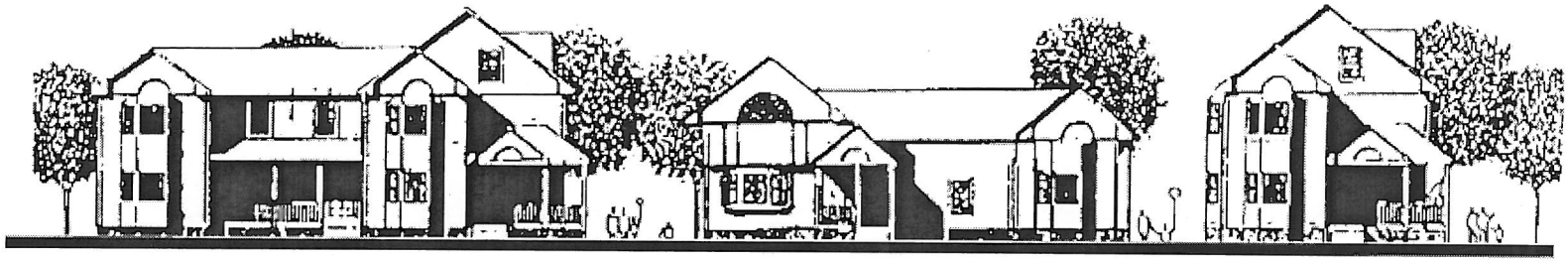
A. Compact Development Concepts

The compact development (CD) design guidelines and standards apply to single family areas zoned for compact development. The CD zone applies to properties no larger than five acres in area in established residential districts.

The Compact development overlay zone applies to properties with frontage along arterial or collector streets or local streets identified in city plans. Compact development zones may also apply to areas deemed appropriate for such development as identified in neighborhood evaluation studies, specific development or neighborhood plans.

The compact development overlay zone is intended to provide for intensive residential development within the urban growth boundary. The zone encourages the development of vacant infill and underutilized properties, which increases the efficient use of land, provides for home ownership opportunities, and promotes the cost-effective use of public facilities. The compact development zone allows for a variety of housing types while assuring through design guidelines and standards that new development adapts to the established character of existing neighborhoods. Housing types allowed in the compact development overlay zone are limited to detached and attached dwellings including duplexes, triplexes, rowhouses, townhouses and accessory dwelling units.

The compact development overlay zone allows, by right, development up to a maximum density of fourteen (14) units per acre. See SRC 139.060. This is in contrast to density being limited to ten (10) units per acre for single family residential (RS) development outside the overlay zone. All compact development is subject to the design guidelines or standards contained in this handbook as well as other applicable city code requirements.



B. General Development Requirement

1. General Development Requirements

a. Guidelines:

1) Provide an appropriate transition that encourages neighborhood compatibility between new structures on-site with structures on abutting sites.

2) Comply with the Compact Development design guidelines contained in this handbook as well as the provisions of Salem Revised Code Chapter 146, Single Family Residential, Salem Revised Code Chapter 139, Compact Development, and other Salem Revised Code sections as appropriate for specific project proposals.

b. Standards:

1) Comply with Compact Development regulations that apply to single family areas zoned for compact development.

2) Comply with the Compact Development design standards contained in this handbook as well as the provisions of Salem Revised Code Chapter 146, Single Family Residential, Salem Revised Code Chapter 139, Compact Development and other Salem Revised Code sections as appropriate for specific project proposals.

3) Design and construct buildings, or portions of buildings, up to twenty-eight (28) feet in height that are set back from any property line in accordance with the building setback requirements of the underlying zone. The building setback shall not be less than the minimum setback established by the underlying zone.

4) In addition to the minimum setback required by the underlying zone, design and construct buildings, or portions of buildings, that exceed twenty eight (28) feet in height with setbacks from any property line an additional one (1) foot for each additional one (1) foot of building height.

Walker School Area
See Development Design Handbook, Walker School area for additional Standards and Guidelines. The area is defined according to the Edgewater Street/Wallace Road area.

Remember
Ensure that the building design meets all other city code provisions including building code requirements.

SECTION 3 – COMPACT DEVELOPMENT - NOTES

C. Open Space Requirements

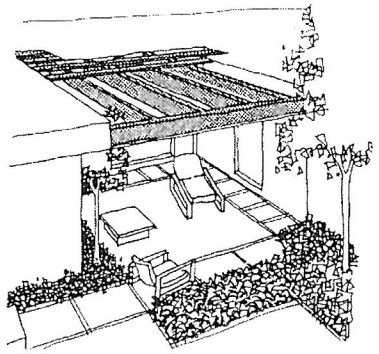
1. Private Open Space Requirements

a. Guidelines:

1) Provide individual private open areas for each dwelling unit.

2) Provide private open space contiguous to the dwelling unit with direct access from the unit.

3) If private open space is adjacent common open space, provide a buffer between the two areas.



b. Standards:

1) For dwelling units located at finished grade, or within five (5) feet of finished grade, provide a minimum of ninety-six (96) square feet of private open space per dwelling unit, with no dimension less than six (6) feet.

2) For dwelling units located more than five (5) feet above finished grade, provide a minimum of forty-eight (48) square feet of private open space per dwelling unit, with no dimension less than six (6) feet.

3) For each unit, provide a direct and accessible route on the same level to all private open space through the use of a doorway.

4) Separate visually the private open space from the common open space through the use of perimeter landscaping or fencing.

SECTION 3 – COMPACT DEVELOPMENT - NOTES

D. Landscaping Requirements

1. Street Trees and On-Site Landscaping

a. Guidelines:

1) Use landscaping to buffer compact developments from abutting uses.

2) Distribute a variety of trees and other plant materials throughout the site including locations near the buildings and provide a canopy coverage to the parking lot.

3) With permission of the Parks Operation Division, plant trees within the public right of way to enhance the residential character of the site.

b. Standards:

1) For every 2,000 square feet of gross site area plant one (1) tree or retain at least one (1) existing tree.

2) Plant trees, so as to provide canopy coverage to at least one-third (1/3) of open space, and bufferyards within fifteen (15) years of planting. Choice of trees are subject to approval of the Parks Operation Division.

3) Within the public right-of-way and with permission of the Parks Operation Division, plant trees at one of the following ratios:

(a) Canopy Trees: one (1) canopy tree in each 50 feet of street frontage or fraction thereof.

(b) Columnar Trees: One (1) columnar tree in each 30 feet of street frontage or fraction thereof.

4) Plant a minimum of two (2) plant units, as defined by Salem Revised Code, Chapter 132, adjacent to the primary entry way of a dwelling unit or combination of dwelling units.

Remember

The Plant Unit Chart is found in the Definitions section of the Appendix.

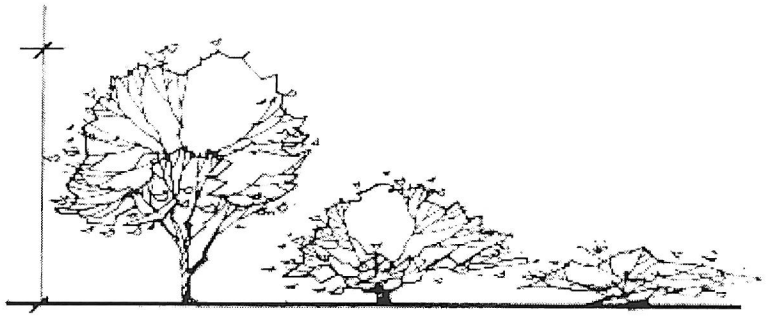
Remember

Additional landscaping requirements are contained in Salem Revised Code Chapter 132, Landscaping. The Salem Parks Operation Division will evaluate project specific landscaping plans for compliance with City code and design requirements.

For planting and maintenance requirements, see SRC 86.050.

D. Landscaping Requirements (cont.)

1. Landscaping Requirements (cont.)



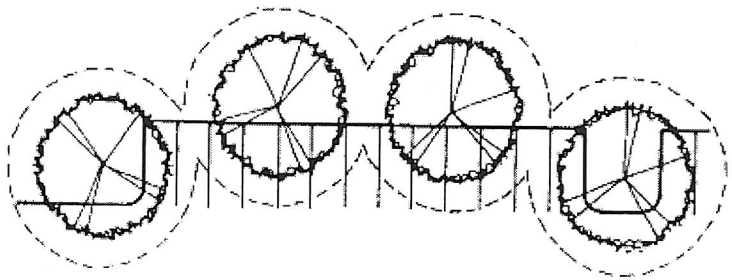
shade tree large shrub small shrub

b. Standards: (cont.)

5) Provide new or retain existing trees at a minimum density of ten (10) plant units per (60) linear feet of exterior wall. Such tree plantings shall not be more than twenty-five (25) feet from the building's exterior wall.

6) When planting shrubs, distribute the plants at a minimum density of one (1) plant unit per fifteen (15) linear feet of exterior walls. Such plantings shall not be more than (25) twenty-five feet from each of the building's exterior walls.

7) Plant at least one (1) canopy tree every fifty (50) feet along the perimeter of parking areas. The trunks of these trees shall be located within fifteen (15) feet of the edge of the parking area. The Department of Community Services maintains a tree list of acceptable parking area canopy trees, those trees requiring minimum maintenance and the least property damage.



E. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

1. Crime Prevention & Security

a. Guidelines:

1) Consider crime prevention and resident safety in the development's architectural, site, and landscaping designs.

2) Plant landscaping and install fencing that does not obscure visual surveillance of common open space, parking areas or dwelling entryways.

b. Standards:

1) Design, construct, and install fences, walls and plant materials located between a street-facing dwelling unit and a public or private street so as to not obstruct visibility of the dwelling entry from the street. Obstructed visibility means the entry is not in view from the street along one-half or more of the unit's frontage.

2) For safety and security, install lighting that illuminates all exterior dwelling unit entrances, pedestrian walkways and parking areas within the project site.

3) File an "Enhanced Safety Assessment Report for Multi-Family Construction" at the time of the building pre-application conference. This Assessment Form is available through the City's Permit Application Center (PAC) and/or the Police Department. Filing the report is required. However, compliance with the provisions of the Assessment are advisable but not mandatory.

Concept

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Crime prevention through environmental design is a concept that has been used to enhance the safety of residents and address the crime problem that afflicts many communities. Crime prevention through environmental design has been successfully used in such communities as Eugene, Oregon, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, and Sarasota, Florida.

English criminologist Barry Poyner found that real estate development and management is a largely unexplored way to control crime. His research has shown that both population characteristics and location factors influence the distribution of crime in a particular area.

SECTION 3 – COMPACT DEVELOPMENT - NOTES

ATTACHMENT C

Cottage Housing

REDMOND, WA

20C.30.52 Cottage Housing Developments.

20C.30.52-010 Purpose.

The purpose of this division is to:

(1) Provide a housing type that responds to changing household sizes and ages (e.g., retirees, small families, single-person households);

(2) Provide opportunities for ownership of small, detached dwelling units within a single-family neighborhood;

(3) Encourage creation of more usable open space for residents of the development through flexibility in density and lot standards;

(4) Support the growth management goal of more efficient use of urban residential land; and

(5) Provide guidelines to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses. (Ord. 2331; Ord. 2249; Ord. 2126)

20C.30.52-020 Applicability.

Cottage housing developments are allowed in all residential areas of the City designated Single-Family Urban in the Willows/Rose Hill Neighborhood, Grass Lawn Neighborhood, North Redmond Neighborhood, Education Hill Neighborhood, and other areas when permitted through a neighborhood plan. See RCDG 20C.30.52-060, Supplemental Neighborhood Require-

ments: Willows/Rose Hill, for cottage development standards specific to the Willows/Rose Hill Neighborhood and RCDG 20C.30.52-065, Supplemental Neighborhood Requirements: North Redmond, for cottage development standards specific to the North Redmond Neighborhood, and RCDG 20C.30.52-070, Supplemental Neighborhood Requirements: Education Hill, for cottage development standards specific to the Education Hill Neighborhood. (Ord. 2356; Ord. 2331; Ord. 2308; Ord. 2249; Ord. 2126)

20C.30.52-030 Cottage Housing Development Size.

Cottage housing developments shall contain a minimum of four and a maximum of 12 cottages located in a cluster, on no less than one-half acre, subject to density requirements listed below, to encourage a sense of community among the residents. A development site may contain more than one cottage housing development. (Ord. 2331; Ord. 2249; Ord. 2126)

20C.30.52-040 Special Site Requirements for Cottage Housing Developments.

(1) Density, Lot Coverage, Height, Setback and Parking Requirements.

(a) Intent. The site requirements chart establishes the basic dimensional requirements for cottages. Development standards are intended to define design parameters of cottages to achieve compatibility with adjacent single-family residential

uses. For site requirements not specified below that may apply, see RCDG 20C.30.25-140, Site Requirements Chart and Flexibility, for the R-6 zoning category.

(b) Requirements – Cottage Housing Developments Site Requirements Chart.

	Site Requirement
Cottages Allowed in Place of Each Standard Single-Family Home Allowed by the Density of the Zone1	1.75
Minimum Lot Frontage (in feet)2	20'
Setbacks for All Structures from Adjacent Property Lines Along the Perimeter of the Site (except front or any public street setback)3, 4	10'
Front or any Public Street Setback5	15'
Minimum Distance Between Structures (including accessory structures)4	10'
Maximum Lot Coverage for Structures	40 percent
Maximum Impervious Surface Area	60 percent
Minimum Open Space	See RCDG 20C.30.52-040(3), Required Minimum Open Space
Maximum Height for Cottages and Accessory Structures	18'
Maximum Height for Cottages with Minimum Roof Slope of 6:126	25'
Parking Spaces per Cottage7	1.5

1 For the purpose of this calculation, fractional values shall be rounded to the nearest whole number (0.5 and above, round up; below 0.5, round down). In no case shall the number of cottages allowed in place of each standard-sized house exceed two.

2 For private streets and access corridors serving less than three lots and accessing directly onto a public street, lot frontage may be reduced to 14 feet.

3 When vehicular access to a cottage housing development is from an alley or access corridor, a four-foot minimum rear setback is allowed.

4 Except standard architectural projections up to a maximum of 18 inches in depth and six feet in width, and eaves up to 1.5 feet.

5 Front orientation shall be determined by the lot on which the cottage housing development is located as it addresses a public street or access corridor.

6 All parts of the roof above 18 feet shall be pitched. The maximum height of any portion of the roof, except chimneys or cupolas, shall not exceed 25 feet anywhere on the site.

7 The Technical Committee may reduce parking requirements based on the applicant's demonstration of site-specific factors that justify a lower standard, such as opportunities for transit service or anticipated number of residents.

(2) Cottage Floor Area.

(a) Intent.

(i) Scale of Development. To ensure that the overall size, including bulk and mass of cottage structures and cottage housing developments, remain smaller and

incur less visual impact than standard-sized single-family dwellings, particularly given the allowed intensity of cottage dwellings.

(ii) Variety. To provide variety in cottage housing developments through a mixture of building sizes and building footprints.

(b) Requirements.

(i) The total floor area of each cottage shall not exceed either 1.5 times the area of the main floor or 1,000 square feet, whichever is less. Attached garages shall be included in the calculation of total floor area.

(ii) Cottage areas that do not count toward the total floor area calculation are:

(A) Unheated storage space located under the main floor of the cottage.

(B) Architectural projections, such as bay windows, fireplaces or utility closets not greater than 18 inches in depth or six feet in width.

(C) Attached roofed porches.

(D) Detached garages or carports.

(E) Spaces with a ceiling height of six feet or less measured to the exterior walls, such as in a second floor area under the slope of the roof.

(F) The Code Administrator may approve other exemptions similar in nature provided the intent of this section is met.

(iii) The maximum main floor area for cottages is 800 square feet. For the purposes of this calculation, the area of interior stairway may be allocated between floors served.

(iv) A minimum of 40 percent of the cottages and not more than 50 percent shall have main floors of 700 square feet or less. For example: in a five-cottage development, two of the cottages would need to have main floors of 700 square feet or less and the other three cottages could have main floors of up to 800 square feet. For fractional numbers 0.5 and above, round up; below 0.5, round down.

(v) The total square foot area of a cottage dwelling unit may not be increased. A note shall be placed on the title to the property for the purpose of notifying future property owners that any increase in the total square footage of a cottage is prohibited for the life of the cottage or duration of City cottage regulations.

(3) Required Minimum Open Space.

(a) Intent. The minimum open space requirements are intended to provide a sense of openness and visual relief in cottage housing developments. Common open space shall provide a centrally located focal area for the cottage housing development. The common area shall be outside of wet storm water ponds, wetlands, streams, lakes, and sensitive area buffers and on slopes of 10 percent or less and developed and maintained so it is usable for active or passive recreation activities. Private open space shall provide private area around the individual dwellings to enable diversity in landscape design.

(b) Requirements.

(i) Common open space shall:

(A) Be a minimum of 400 square feet per cottage.

(B) Abut at least 50 percent of the cottages in a cottage housing development.

(C) Have cottages abutting on at least two sides.

(ii) Cottages shall:

(A) Be oriented around and have the main entry from the common open space.

(B) Be within 60 feet walking distance of the common open space.

(iii) Private open space shall:

(A) Be a minimum of 300 square feet of private, contiguous, usable open space adjacent to each dwelling unit, for the exclusive use of the cottage resident. It shall be oriented toward the common open space as much as possible, with no dimension less than 10 feet.

(B) Additionally, cottages shall have a roofed porch at least 80 square feet in size with a minimum dimension of eight feet on any side.

(4) Screening.

(a) Intent. To ensure that cottage housing developments do not create adverse visual impacts for residents of the cottage housing development and adjacent properties, and to maintain a single-family character along public streets. This subsection sets out requirements and guidelines for minimizing potential impacts resulting from the parking structures and other storage and waste facilities.

(b) Parking Requirements. Parking shall be:

(i) Located on the cottage housing development property.

(ii) Screened from public streets and adjacent residential uses by landscaping or architectural screening.

(iii) Located in clusters of not more than five adjoining spaces.

(iv) Prohibited in the front yard setback area. (See Footnote 5, Cottage Housing Developments Site Requirements Chart.)

(v) Prohibited within 40 feet of a public street, except: single-loaded parking is allowed in a maximum 50-foot-wide area when set back a minimum of 15 feet from a public street. (See Figure 1)

(vi) Allowed between or adjacent to structures only when it is located toward the rear of the principal structure and is served by an alley or private driveway.

(vii) A pitched roof design is required for all parking structures. If a parking structure is attached to a cottage unit, review by the Design Review Board shall be required.

(viii) The Code Administrator may approve other methods provided the intent of this section is met.

(c) Screening Requirements.

(i) Boundaries between cottage dwellings and neighboring properties shall be screened with landscaping to reduce the appearance of bulk or intrusion onto adjacent properties, or otherwise treated (e.g., through setbacks or architectural techniques) to meet the intent of this section.

(ii) Common waste and other storage receptacles shall not be placed in the front yard setback area.

(iii) Common waste and other storage receptacles shall be architecturally screened and/or screened with landscaping so as to mask their appearance to residents, adjacent properties, and the public right-of-way.

(5) Accessory Dwelling Units. RCDG 20C.30.35 provides for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in residential areas. For the purposes of this section, additional requirements for ADUs are as follows:

(a) The number of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), either attached or detached, that are permitted in a cottage housing development shall be based on the underlying density calculation for standard-sized dwellings that would be attributed to that site. For example, if the density calculation for a site indicates that three standard size homes would be allowed, then three ADUs plus the number of cottages allowed would be the total number of dwelling units permitted on the site. (For fractional values of 0.5 and above, round up; below 0.5, round down.)

(b) The size of an accessory dwelling unit shall be subordinate to that of the primary, or cottage dwelling. For any ADU, the total square footage of the ADU shall not exceed the lesser of (i) 500 square feet or (ii) 40 percent of the total square footage of the primary dwelling unit and the accessory dwelling unit combined. ADUs attached to a cottage shall count in the 1,000 square foot maximum floor area. ADUs in a detached structure do not count in the 1,000 square foot maximum floor area.

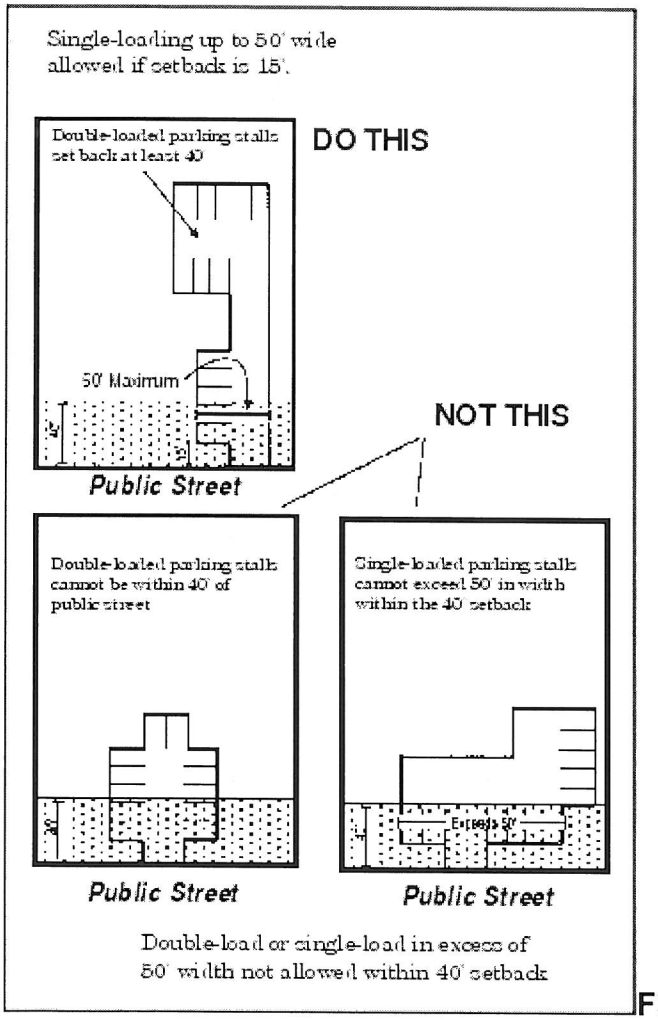


Figure 1. Cottage Housing Parking Requirements

(c) Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are allowed in cottage housing developments only when proposed at the time of initial cottage development application.

(d) Review by the Design Review Board may be required.

(e) Accessory dwelling units are not allowed with cottages in the Willows/Rose Hill or Education Hill Neighborhood.

(6) Community Buildings. A cottage housing development may contain community building(s) that are clearly incidental in use or size and related to the dwelling units. Such community buildings shall be located on the same site as the cottage housing development and be commonly owned by the residents.

(7) Existing Dwellings. An existing detached or attached single-family dwelling that is incorporated into a cottage housing development as a residence and is nonconforming with respect to the standards of this section shall be permitted to remain on a site used for a cottage housing development. However, the extent of the noncompliance may not be increased unless the proposed change is determined by the Code Administrator to be consistent in character, scale and design with the cottage housing development. If the existing dwelling meets the requirements of this section with regard to size and is able to conform to other site standards, it may be counted as a cottage in the density calculation for the site. If the existing dwelling does not meet the size limitation for a cottage, then it shall count as one standard size dwelling. (Ord. 2356; Ord. 2331; Ord. 2249; Ord. 2126)

ATTACHMENT D

Cottage Housing Development

March, 2000

The Housing Partnership
1301 Fifth Avenue Suite 2400
Seattle, Washington 98101-2603
425-453-5123
425-462-0776 fax
mluis@seanet.com

The Housing Partnership is a non-profit organization (officially known as the King County Housing Alliance) dedicated to increasing the supply of affordable housing in King County. This is achieved, in part, through policies of local government that foster increased housing development while preserving affordability and neighborhood character. The Partnership pursues these goals by: (a) building public awareness of housing affordability issues; (b) promoting design and regulatory solutions; and (c) acting as a convener of public, private and community leaders concerned about housing. The Partnership's officers for 2000 are: **Rich Bennion,** HomeStreet Bank, Chair; **Paige Miller**, Port of Seattle, Vice Chair; **Gary Ackerman**, Foster Pepper & Shefelman, Secretary; **Tom Witte**, Bank of America, Chair, Finance Committee; **J. Tayloe Washburn**, Foster Pepper & Shefelman, Chair, Land Use Committee.

Introduction

Although a significant number of Americans live in multi-family housing, research shows that single family housing is the overwhelming preference in this country. Surveys by Fannie Mae indicate that upwards of 85 percent of Americans would prefer to live in a detached house, and that they will make major sacrifices to do so.

Why is it that while our cultural cousins in Europe happily live in large urban flats and townhouses, Americans feel deprived if they do not have their own castle? While this question begins to get into scary psychological and sociological territory, dealing with frontier traditions and questions of personal space, we do know a few things. For instance, Housing Partnership research in 1998 showed that King County residents place a very high value on safety, quiet and privacy, three important features of single family, detached housing in low density neighborhoods.

In the end, however, a preference expressed by 85 percent of people does not need to be defended. It demands to be accommodated. In King County we are doing a nice job of accommodating the housing needs of upper-income families with children. We are, however, falling short of meeting the needs of families that cannot afford to pay $300,000 for a house near their job, or who want a detached house but do not need 2500 square feet of space and a large yard.

Part of the challenge of meeting the housing needs of our growing and thriving region is to offer housing types that address the values that drive demand for detached, single family housing, but with smaller spaces and smaller price tags

Part of the challenge of meeting the housing needs of our growing and thriving region is to offer housing types that address the values that drive demand for detached, single family housing, but with smaller spaces and smaller price tags.

Enter the cottage!

Cottage housing provides an option that preserves the privacy and personal space of a detached house in a smaller and less costly unit. Cottages are usually built in clusters and can introduce a sense of community. In the marketplace they offer an alternative to the two choices most often available: single family houses and condominiums. For those looking for a detached house, cottages provide a way to trade quantity of space for quality of space.

While quite a number of successful cottage developments, both old and new, can be found in the Puget Sound area, this is still not a common style of housing development. But as communities try to find ways to meet their housing needs in the more dense patterns called for in the Growth Management Act, cottage housing offers an option that should be added to the mix.

This short report is intended to be a primer on cottage development and to point the way for cities to develop approaches to cottage zoning that will interest developers and buyers in this attractive form of housing. A follow-up report will provide a case study of the Ravenna cottage project being undertaken by Threshold Housing.

Definition

There is no precise definition of cottage housing, and it is not clear when a house ceases to be a cottage and becomes a small-lot house, or simply a house. For purposes of this discussion, however, we will assume that cottages are built in clusters, close together, have some common area, and do not have parking adjacent to each cottage. Cottages usually provide some means for neighbors to inevitably run into each other. One person described the Third Street Cottages in Langley as "co-housing without all the meetings."

Cottages usually provide some means for neighbors to inevitably run into each other. One person described the Third Street Cottages in Langley as "co-housing without all the meetings."

The following discussion of design features should help round out a picture of cottage housing.

Cottage Design Features

Size. Among cottages in the area, the small end of the size range would be found in the Pine Street Cottages in Seattle, which have about 450 square feet on the main floor, plus a 100 square foot loft. This space allows for living room, bedroom, kitchen and full bath. At the larger end of the size spectrum, the Ravenna cottages in Seattle will offer about 950 square feet of space in two stories. This allows for two bedrooms and one and a half baths. The Third Street Cottages in Langley, Washington, range from 600 to 650 square feet on the main floor, plus lofts ranging from 100 to 280 square feet.

The cottage zoning ordinance in Seattle limits cottages to 975 square feet, with no more than one third of that space in either a basement or upper level. Although definitions are squishy, cottage proponents would generally put the upper size limit around 1000 square feet.

Location. Both existing and new cottage clusters are located within single family areas. The older clusters, built in the early part of the century, predate the current zoning and have been grandfathered. The Third Street cottages in Langley were built under a special cottage zoning ordinance, and the Ravenna cottages in Seattle are being built under a special design demonstration project ordinance.

Single family neighborhoods will be the optimum location for cottage clusters, both because of the economics of land cost and to achieve the promise of a single-family feel at multi-family prices.

Single family neighborhoods will be the optimum location for cottage clusters, both because of the economics of land cost and to achieve the promise of a single-family feel at multi-family prices. One- or two-story cottages would not fit well into a multi-family zone where taller, bulkier structures would overwhelm them. The existing Seattle cottage zoning ordinance, which limits cottage clusters to lowrise multi-family zones, has not resulted in any new cottage projects.

Clustering. Cottages tend to be clustered together around some common open space, such as a courtyard or walkway. If the land is in condominium ownership (the easiest, but maybe not the most popular method) agreements will specify the areas that are subject to common maintenance and those that are the owners' responsibility.

To maximize the chances of a good social atmosphere in a cottage cluster, it is generally believed that there should be at least four cottages in a cluster, and no more than twelve . . . clusters should not be built too close together in the same area

The surest way to destroy public support for cottage development would be to build cheap little boxes that add density while degrading the aesthetics of the neighborhood. . . . such development will inevitably erode support for the higher densities necessary for long-term affordability.

Some utility features may also be clustered or in common. For instance, the Pine Street Cottages have a shared, off-street parking area. The Third Street Cottages have a shared workshop building and a separate building with storage lockers. The Ravenna cottages have storage areas under one cottage, taking advantage of a drop in grade.

A less tangible part of the clustering concept is the relationships that develop among the occupants. In clusters where the front doors face each other (Bungalow Court, Greenbush Court, Third Street, Ravenna) neighbors are bound to run into each other. The Pine Street Cottages have a landscaped courtyard that acts as everyone's back yard. To foster a sense of community beyond that which might emerge naturally from common spaces or owners associations, the developer may raise an implicit or explicit expectation to buyers that the cottage cluster is no place for hermits.

To maximize the chances of a good social atmosphere in a cottage cluster, it is generally believed that there should be at least four cottages in a cluster, and no more than twelve. Furthermore, to preserve both the original feel of the neighborhood as well as the special atmosphere of cottages, clusters should not be built too close together in the same area.

Land Use. The efficiency of land use is gained by clustering the cottages relatively closely together. The Pine Street cottages feature 10 units on about a third of an acre, clustered around a common courtyard. The Ravenna project clusters six cottages plus a garage with three carriage units on about a quarter acre. The Third Street Cottages in Langley provide a little more space, placing eight cottages and two common utility buildings on two-thirds of an acre. These densities range from 12 units/acre to 36 units/acre. The Seattle ordinance requires a minimum of 1,600 square feet per cottage (i.e. no more than 26 units per acre), and 6,400 square feet for the whole cluster (suggesting a minimum of four cottages).

Softening impacts. In spite of higher densities, experience has shown that cottage clusters can fit very nicely with their surroundings. Older clusters, like Pine Street on Capitol Hill or the Bungalow Court on First Hill, mirror the craftsman architecture of the surrounding homes. Newer clusters also employ more traditional architectural styles. In all cases, careful attention to design detail and landscaping softens the impact of higher densities.

Going one step further, a design goal should be that the cottage cluster actually improve the surrounding neighborhood, rather than having just a neutral impact. Off-street parking, landscaping, interesting facades and other design features can result in a better streetscape than single-family houses might yield. A cottage cluster can present less mass than single family houses that maximize the building envelope. The pedestrian orientation of cottages puts more people on the sidewalk, enhancing neighborhood security.

The surest way to destroy public support for cottage development would be to build cheap little boxes that add density while degrading the aesthetics of the neighborhood. While very inexpensive cottages may provide affordability in the short run, such development will inevitably erode support for the higher densities necessary for long-term affordability.

The Market for Cottages

The predominant buyers of cottages in recent years have been single people. . . The buyer profile developed for the Ravenna cottages indicates that the majority of buyers will be women.

Although some question the market attractiveness of cottages and very small houses, those that have been on the market in the Puget Sound region have tended to sell very well and to hold their value. So although experience is limited, there is clearly a market for cottages. Following are some key market considerations.

Singles. The predominant buyers of cottages in recent years have been single people. These individuals have the option of buying a condominium or an older house, but opt for cottages because they offer the privacy of a single family house with the low maintenance requirements of new construction or a condominium. The buyer profile developed for the Ravenna cottages indicates that the majority of buyers will be women.

Couples and single parents. Cottages can work well for couples or single parents. To work for small children care would need to be taken to enclose open space.

Seniors. Cottages can work well for seniors, especially those wanting to stay in a detached house in their neighborhood, but unwilling or unable to care for their current house. The loft approach will present problems for residents less able to negotiate steep stairs.

Implicit in the cottage concept is the trade-off between space and the quality of construction. . . This is especially important for that segment of the market that could afford a full-sized house, but chooses a smaller space.

Space-quality trade-off. Implicit in the cottage concept is the trade-off between space and the quality of construction. Some of the savings from land cost and building size can be put into better finishes, interesting design elements, appliance and fixture upgrades and landscaping. This is especially important for that segment of the market that could afford a full-sized house, but chooses a smaller space.

Economics of Cottage Housing Development

Cottages, like any other form of housing, can come to market in a wide range of prices, depending on what the potential buyers in that area might be willing to pay.

At the low end, for example, a cluster of eight cottages on a third of an acre in an outlying area with modest amenities could come in at around $130,000 per cottage. At the higher end, a cluster of six cottages on a half acre, in a desirable close in neighborhood, with high grade finishes and amenities, might come in at $300,000.

The developer, in deciding what price range to aim for, looks at the alternatives available to the prospective buyer. As noted above, cottages occupy a place in the market between small, older houses and condominiums. So, for a $130,000 cottage to compete with an older rambler at $160,000 it needs to emphasize the low maintenance advantages of new construction. At the other end, the cottage in a desirable area can

easily compete with condominiums that easily top $300,000 by offering that crucial space between neighbors.

The big economic edge for cottages is low land cost per unit, and this cannot be achieved on most multi-family zoned land which is much more expensive

From a policy perspective, then, cottages can be part of an affordability strategy. A $200,000 cottage in North Seattle may be beyond the range of middle wage earners, but is still less expensive than most existing houses and certainly less than other new construction houses in the area. Furthermore, cottages can take pressure off the single family market by providing an alternative to those who like the privacy of single family houses but need less space.

All of these assumptions about unit pricing are based on land prices that predominate in single family zones. The big economic edge for cottages is low land cost per unit, and this cannot be achieved on most multi-family zoned land which is much more expensive. In a cottage project built in a single family zone, land cost will be 15 to 20 percent of total sales, in contrast to the 25 to 30 percent of sales that is customary in single family development.

Development Standards

[Development] standards must achieve a balance so that they protect neighborhood character and at the same time provide incentives for cottage development.

To ensure that cottage projects fit well into existing single family neighborhoods, careful thought needs to be given to specific development standards. These standards must achieve a balance so that they protect neighborhood character and at the same time provide incentives for cottage development.

Three cottage zoning ordinances exist in the region. The Seattle ordinance was adopted in 1994, but restricted cottages to the lowest density multi-family zones. The city of Langley, on Whidbey Island, adopted a cottage ordinance using the Seattle model, but allowing cottages in single family zones. The City of Shoreline adopted a cottage zoning ordinance modeled after Langley. The issues that follow will reference the Seattle ordinance, but that should not suggest that it's standards are the only approach.

Lot coverage. The Seattle ordinance limits overall lot coverage for a cottage cluster to 35 percent (for lowrise duplex/triplex zones) or 40 percent (lowrise 1 zones). In addition, individual cottages are not to exceed 650 square feet of lot coverage.

Setbacks. The Seattle ordinance requires a 10 foot setback in the front and rear yards, and allows the centerline of an alley to count as the reference point for the rear yard. The Seattle ordinance requires a five foot side yard setback. The space between cottages must be at least six feet. The side with the main entrance door must be 10 feet from the next cottage.

Height and Bulk. In Seattle, concern was raised about the prospect of "skinny houses," that might overwhelm their neighbors. To guard against this prospect, first, a requirement was written that restricts a second floor to no more than half the square footage of the first floor. Second, height restrictions were written that effectively limit cottages to one and a half stories (i.e., parts of the second story do not have a full eight-foot height).

Open Space. The Seattle ordinance requires at least 400 square feet of usable open space in duplex/triplex zones, and 300 square feet in lowrise 1 zones. In both cases, this space is evenly divided between private space adjacent to the unit, and space available to everyone in the cluster. In all of these spaces, the horizontal dimensions must be at least 10 feet, but this requirement is not met in existing or planned cottage developments.

Parking. As with so many development issues, parking is central to the acceptability of cottages. The Seattle ordinance requires one parking space per cottage, and does not allow those spaces to be built between cottages. Although the Pine Street Cottages predate this requirement, they do provide one off street space per cottage in a secured lot behind the courtyard. The Ravenna Cottage project includes a nine-car garage structure with three carriage units on top (i.e. one space per cottage and per carriage unit). Neither the existing Bungalow Court nor the Greenbush Court in Seattle provide off-street parking. The Third Street Cottages in Langley provide one space per unit with a couple of guest spaces available.

Dispersion. To help allay fears about a rapid increase in densities in Seattle, and to protect the uniqueness of the cottage concept, the original cottage zoning proposal contained a dispersion requirement. (At this point in the legislative process the ordinance had still allowed cottage clusters in single family zones.) Under the dispersion requirement, no cottage cluster could be built within one block of another.

Conclusion

Nearly all housing being built today consists of either single family houses on full lots, or multi-family units in large buildings. Cottage housing offers a middle ground that will be attractive to some segments of the market.

If we are to achieve our goals of more compact urban development, we need to expand the range of housing types available to consumers. Nearly all housing being built today consists of either single family houses on full lots, or multi-family units in large buildings. Cottage housing offers a middle ground that will be attractive to some segments of the market.

Design and economic considerations suggest that cottages will work best if allowed in single family zones. Experience shows that cottages can fit nicely into existing neighborhoods, but experience also shows that density increases are always a tough sell. As with so many questions of density, the policy challenge is to find ways to ensure that cottage development in single family areas follows good design principles. Cottage housing is a wonderful idea that could be killed off with just a few bad experiences.

If we begin now, builders, consumers, local governments and neighbors will soon figure out how to add cottages to the box of tools we need to achieve our growth visions.